



SA 20-13 Distant Teleworking from Outside the DC Region (09/01/2020)

This special announcement establishes temporary Library policy to allow eligible employees to telework during the pandemic emergency from an offsite work location that is outside the Washington, D.C. region.

Enhanced telework is part of the Library's strategy to make Library facilities safer for everyone during the pandemic by reducing the number of people working on site. To promote this social distancing, the Library extended the enhanced telework policy through December 31, 2020, for employees who have work assignments that are appropriate for telework and who are capable of teleworking. Some teleworking employees may find that working from a location outside the region would help them balance their work and personal responsibilities during the pandemic — by facilitating child care or eldercare, for example. The Library will offer teleworking employees this flexibility as provided in this special announcement.

1. Employees May Telework from Outside the Locality Pay Area

Eligible employees (as described in section 4) may be approved to telework from an offsite work location that is outside the [locality pay area for the Washington, D.C. region](#). Distant teleworking during the pandemic is a temporary flexibility granted at the employee's request and is not a change to the employee's official duty station. The Library will not change the employee's locality pay rate during this temporary distant teleworking period. The Library may terminate the employee's distant telework arrangement when necessary.

The employee's distant telework location must be within the United States. Employees must coordinate with their supervisors to mitigate any issues related to time zone differences between their distant work location and the Library. Supervisors may require employees to be available during certain core hours. In addition, the employee should refer to the [Library's Telework Home/Alternate Worksite Safety Checklist](#) to maintain their work site in a safe condition.

2. Two Weeks' Notice to Return to Work On Site at the Library

The Library may require distant teleworking employees to return to work on site at Library facilities. Supervisors will normally give employees two weeks' notice before scheduling them to work on site, unless the service unit head determines that, for business reasons, shorter notice is necessary. Note that employees whose duties may require in-person service to Congress, including, but not limited to, in-person testimony or hearing support, may not be eligible for distant telework or may be required to return from their offsite work location on shorter notice. Employees are solely responsible for transportation and other expenses of any trips between their distant work site and their official duty station.

3. Computer Access Required

A distant teleworking employee's offsite work location must have internet connectivity that supports access to Library systems. Employees must immediately notify their supervisors if their Library-issued computer becomes inoperable, or if they experience utility outages or other technical issues that prevent them from teleworking. Supervisors are encouraged to make temporary alternative work assignments that do not require computer access.

If the employee's Library-issued computer becomes inoperable, the employee must return to the Library promptly (usually within 72 hours or less) to remedy the issue. Employees are solely responsible for transportation and other expenses of any trips between their distant work site and the Library.

During any period the employee is unable to telework or to perform alternative assignments, the employee must take accrued leave or leave without pay. Administrative leave is not available for this purpose. (Time interacting with the Library to resolve computer issues is an alternative assignment; travel time necessitated by the employee's distant work site is not.)

4. Eligibility, Request and Approval

Employees are eligible for distant telework during the pandemic if their service unit determines that:

- the essential functions of the employee's position are suitable for telework;
- the employee's performance has been fully successful or better and the employee is able to work independently with minimal supervision;
- the employee is unlikely to be required on site in the next 60 or 120 days; and,
- the on-site elements of the employee's job can be deferred or shifted within the work unit for a short period.

Employees must complete a request form that identifies the distant location from which they will be teleworking and confirms that they understand their responsibilities under this special announcement. The employee is not required to state a reason for requesting to telework from outside the Washington, D.C. region.

The employee's supervisor will assess the request based on the eligibility factors above and recommend to the service unit head whether the request should be approved or denied. The service unit head's decision on the employee's request for distant telework is final.

Supervisors may approve distant telework for less than one pay period without the formalities of this special announcement.

5. Effective Date and Duration

This policy takes effect August 30, 2020 and remains in effect until December 31, 2020. Employees may be approved for an initial period of distant teleworking through October 31, 2020. This approval may be renewed for an additional period through December 31, 2020.